

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01     PARIS 37823 01 OF 02 231219Z  
ACTION EUR-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 ACDA-10 CIAE-00 INR-05 L-01 PA-01  
PM-03 PRS-01 SAJ-01 SP-02 MC-01 NSC-05 NSCE-00 DODE-00  
/051 W

----- 105464 /13

R 231224Z DEC 76  
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8209  
INFO USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 37823

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: NATO PARM FR  
SUBJECT: FRANCE-NATO: RECENT ISSUES

REF: USNATO 6898

SUMMARY: PENDING INTENSIVE DISCUSSION WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS WITH GOF OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR NATO, OUR PRELIMINARY REACTION TO REFTEL IS MIXED. WE AGREE THAT THE BEST POLICY FOR THE US IS A CONTINUATION OF THE PRESENT CAREFUL, PATIENT BUT PURPOSEFUL APPROACH. ON INDIVIDUAL ISSUES WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD ANALYZE EACH CASE ON ITS MERITS AND REACT IN ACCORDANCE WITH OUR BEST INTERESTS RATHER THAN TO SEEK AN OVERALL FRENCH RATIONALE. IN SHORT, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE GOF SEEKS TO ERODE NATO INSTITUTIONS CONSCIOUSLY OR UNCONSCIOUSLY. WE BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD REACT STRONGLY TO GOF EFFORTS TO HAVE THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE REJECT TASKS ASSIGNED BY THE DPC. THE QUESTION OF CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFERS, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS MUCH MORE COMPLEX THAN DEPICTED REFTEL, AND MERITS ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF US INTERESTS. END SUMMARY.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02     PARIS 37823 01 OF 02 231219Z

1. ON THE QUESTION OF DPC REQUESTS TO THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE, THE EMBASSY AGREES WITH THE THRUST OF USNATO 6912 THAT FRENCH OBJECTIONS ARE UNACCEPTABLE. AS INDICATED BY THE NATO INTERNATIONAL STAFF, THE DPC IS AN ORGAN OF THE 15, AND THE FACT THAT FRANCE CHOOSES NOT TO

PARTICIPATE DOES NOT MAKE THE DPC AN ORGAN OF 14 AS CLAIMED BY AMBASSADOR TINE. EMBASSY WILL BE HITTING PACTS AND DISARMAMENT DIRECTOR PAGNIEZ HARD ON THIS ONE AS SOON AS AN APPOINTMENT CAN BE ARRANGED, AND WE AGREE THAT RESISTANCE SHOULD BE VIGOROUS IN BRUSSELS.

2. ON THE QUESTION OF CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFERS, EMBASSY DOES NOT INTERPRET MISTRAL'S REMARKS (PARIS 37001) AS INDICATING A PHILOSOPHICAL FRENCH OBJECTION TO ALL ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT DISCUSSIONS WITHIN NATO ORGANS. AS REFTEL CORRECTLY INDICATES, CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFERS CONSTITUTE AN IMPORTANT NORTH-SOUTH ISSUE. GOF FEELS, RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY, THAT NORTH-SOUTH PROBLEMS NOT ONLY CANNOT BE SOLVED IN THE NATO CONTEXT BUT THAT NATO DISCUSSIONS TEND TO MAKE THE SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS ALL THE MORE DIFFICULT.

3. MORE IMPORTANT, CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFERS CONSTITUTE A VERY SENSITIVE INTERNAL POLITICO-ECONOMIC ISSUE HERE, AND GIVEN OUR INTEREST IN WHAT HAPPENS IN THE NEXT LEGISLATIVE ELECTION, WE SHOULD BE VERY CAREFUL ABOUT HOW WE TREAT THE PROBLEM. IN A PERIOD OF ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY, NO FRENCH GOVERNMENT CAN EXPOSE ITSELF TO CRITICISM THAT IT MIGHT BE CONSIDERING LIMITATIONS ON FRENCH ARMS EXPORTS, WHICH ACCOUNT FOR THE THIRD LARGEST VOLUME IN THE WORLD AFTER THE US AND THE USSR. TOO MANY JOBS DEPEND ON THAT VOLUME. OUR CONCLUSION ABOUT THIS QUESTION IS THAT IF WE WANT SOME MOVEMENT WE CANNOT IGNORE THE FRENCH IN VIEW OF THEIR POSITION IN THE INTERNATIONAL MARKETPLACE. AND IF WE WANT TO ENGAGE THE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03      PARIS 37823 01 OF 02 231219Z

FRENCH IN A CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE ON THE SUBJECT, WE WILL HAVE TO CREATE AN APPROPRIATE CHANNEL. THE HANDLING OF NUCLEAR EXPORT POLICY THROUGH THE CLUB OF LONDON IS A RELEVANT PRECEDENT WITH RESPECT TO THE LEVEL OF PERCEIVED POLITICAL SENSITIVITY. EMBASSY RECOMMENDATION THEREFORE IS THAT DEPARTMENT ANALYZE THIS PROBLEM IN GREATER DEPTH TO DETERMINE HOW BEST TO ENGAGE THE FRENCH IN THE NECESSARY DIALOGUE ON CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFERS RATHER THAN FOCUS EXCLUSIVELY ON MAINTAINING THE MOMENTUM IN NATO INSTITUTIONS, IMPORTANT AS THIS IS. IF WE INSIST ON THE LATTER, WE JUST ARE NOT GOING TO GET ANYWHERE WITH THE ALLY WHICH IS SELLING MOST OF THE ARMS.

4. IN CONCLUSION, WE TAKE VERY SERIOUSLY USNATO COMMENT IN PARAGRAPH FIVE REFTEL. WE CAN READILY UNDERSTAND HOW A PATTERN OF JURIDICAL NITPICKING BY THE FRENCH DELEGATION, EVEN AFTER EIGHTEEN YEARS DURING WHICH WE MIGHT

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01     PARIS 37823 02 OF 02 231223Z  
ACTION EUR-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 ACDA-10 CIAE-00 INR-05 L-01 PA-01  
PM-03 PRS-01 SAJ-01 SP-02 MC-01 NSC-05 NSCE-00 DODE-00  
/051 W

----- 105535 /13

R 231224Z DEC 76  
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8210  
INFO USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 37823

LIMDIS

HAVE ACCUSTOMED OURSELVES TO IT, CAN FRUSTRATE THE DAILY OPERATION AND DEADEN THE ATMOSPHERE. WE HATE IT AS MUCH AS USNATO DOES. WE ARE NOT YET READY TO CONCLUDE, HOWEVER, THAT THERE IS A WILLFUL INTENT TO ERODE NATO AS AN INSTITUTION. OUR DISCUSSIONS HERE AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS AS WELL AS WITH THE BUREAUCRACY CONVINCED US OTHERWISE.

5. THE ESSENCE OF OUR FRENCH PROBLEM IS THAT SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH GISCARD'S DECISION TO REINFORCE MILITARY TIES WITH NATO, A DECISION WAS TAKEN TO STONEWALL THE EXPANSION OF NATO DISCUSSIONS BEYOND THE ORIGINAL EAST-WEST SECURITY CONTEXT. THE FRENCH HAVE NO INHIBITIONS ABOUT BEING A MINORITY OF ONE IN REJECTING OUR VISION OF BROADER ALLIANCE COMPETENCE AND CAPABILITY. IT WOULD BE MISSING THE POINT, IN OUR VIEW, TO ATTRIBUTE FRANCE'S ATTITUDE TO BUREAUCRATIC INFIGHTING OR TO GISCARD'S PROBLEMS WITH THE GAULLISTS. THIS MAY BE TRUE FOR INDIVIDUAL ISSUES, BUT ON THE WHOLE, THE FRENCH ARE JUST NOT CONVINCED THAT NATO IS RELEVANT TO MOST OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC ISSUES THAT DOMINATE WORLD POLITICS TODAY. IF WE FEEL OTHERWISE, WE SHOULD CONFRONT THE FRENCH WITH

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02    PARIS 37823 02 OF 02 231223Z

APPROPRIATE ARGUMENTATION. ON THE OTHER HAND, TO ARGUE THAT FRENCH REFUSAL TO GO ALONG WITH THE MAJORITY TENDS TO WEAKEN NATO AS AN INSTITUTION IS UNCONVINCING BECAUSE THE FRENCH WILL ONLY REPLY, WITH SOME JUSTIFICATION, THAT EVERYTHING THEY HAVE DONE UNDER GISCARD HAS HAD THE OBJECTIVE OF STRENGTHENING NATO AS IT WAS ORIGINALLY CONCEIVED.

6. THE FOREGOING LEADS US TO THE SAME CONCLUSION REACHED BY USNATO. NO RADICAL ACTION OR INITIATIVE IS CALLED FOR. WE JUST HAVE TO BE PATIENT AND TRY TO PERSUADE THE FRENCH ISSUE BY ISSUE OF OUR COLLECTIVE INTEREST IN OPENING THE ALLIANCE DOOR TO DISCUSSIONS OF NON-TRADITIONAL SUBJECTS. HOWEVER, WE WOULD SOFT-PEDAL THE VIEW THAT FRENCH INTRANSIGENCE CAN LEAD TO AN EROSION OF NATO AS AN INSTITUTION LEST THIS ANALYSIS BECOME SELF-FULFILLING.

HARLAN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** POLICIES, REGIONAL DEFENSE ORGANIZATIONS, RELATIONS WITH REGIONAL ORGS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 23 DEC 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** BoyleJA  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976PARIS37823  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760471-0057  
**From:** PARIS  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19761217/aaaaaodf.tel  
**Line Count:** 189  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** LIMDIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** LIMDIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** BoyleJA  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 07 APR 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <07 APR 2004 by ShawDG>; RELEASED <07 APR 2004 by ellisoob>; APPROVED <02 AUG 2004 by BoyleJA>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** FRANCE-NATO: RECENT ISSUES  
**TAGS:** PARM, FR, US, NATO  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006